

## COBEN CHANGES FOR 2008

The following are highlights of changes in the CoBen Program for 2008. These changes will be reflected in the BAM in January, 2008.

### What's New in the CoBen Manual

- **Section 1600. Change in Permitting Event Code Table, Page 1** - Permitting Event language will now include commencement of survivor benefits as a permitting event to enroll into CoBen Cash:

Commencement of health/dental coverage provided through spouse, domestic partner, *survivor benefits*, or other source (due to an employment status change).

- **Section 1602. Benefit Allowance** - Benefit allowances will be updated to reflect 2008 CoBen benefit contributions. These contributions can also be found on PML 2007-021 at:

<http://www.dpa.ca.gov/textdocs/freepmls/PML2007021.pdf>

- **Section 1606. Eligibility for Consolidated Benefits** -

**In the area of Eligibility Restrictions, this bullet will be modified to include “newly enroll” based on commencement of survivor benefits”:**

Employees who are eligible to receive the survivor benefits after the death of a spouse or domestic partner can **newly enroll** into the CoBen Cash benefit if not already enrolled, or continue to receive the CoBen Cash if currently enrolled into CoBen Cash.

**The following bullet is added to Eligibility Restrictions:**

“Employees who are maintaining coverage on any state-sponsored health and/or dental benefits (including the CSU system) **ARE NOT** eligible for the Cash Option.”

- **Section 1608. Enrollment Appeal Process** - New zip code (no other change):

Department of Personnel Administration  
Benefits Division - CoBen Program  
1515 "S" Street, North Building, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA **95811-7258**

- **Section 1612. Change In Pay Status While Enrolled In COBEN Cash** - Section on Military leave is added:

**Military Leave** - Pursuant to Government Code Section 19755.18, state employees called to active military duty for the War on Terrorism are eligible to retain their State benefits for up to 365 calendar days above the 180 calendar days provided by GC Section 19755.17. If an employee is currently receiving CoBen Cash in lieu of health and/or dental benefits, he/she may continue to receive the cash for the duration of their military leave, not to exceed the time limits mentioned above. Military Leave is not a permitting event to newly enroll into the CoBen Cash Program. Employees enrolled in the medical reimbursement account may elect to continue their coverage via COBRA or their deductions will stop for the duration of their leave.

## **What's New in the CoBen Handbook for 2008**

- **Pages 3 and 4** - CoBen benefit allowance information has been updated for 2008.
- **Page 6** - Under "Changes Allowed Due to Permitting Event", the inclusion of information on Military leave is added:

### **Military Leave**

Pursuant to Government Code Section 19775.18, state employees called to active military duty for the War on Terrorism are eligible to retain their State benefits for up to 365 calendar days above the 180 calendar days provided by GC Section 19775.17. If an employee is currently receiving CoBen Cash in lieu of health and/or dental benefits, he/she may continue to receive the cash for the duration of their military leave, not to exceed the time limits mentioned above. Military Leave is not a permitting event to newly enroll into the CoBen Cash Program.

- **Page 7** - Permitting Events, table areas have been updated to include domestic partner language:

Under permitting event "death of spouse", the term "domestic partner" has been added.

- **Page 9** - 2008 Benefit Plan Premiums:

All health and dental rates are updated for the 2008 plan year.